

JOB APPLICANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.



For better farming, food and health

Organic Research Centre
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APPLICATIONS WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED ON THE ORGANIC RESEARCH CENTRE'S APPLICATION FORMS.

What is the Organic Research Centre?

ORC's vision is a world which meets the nutritional needs of current and future generations with safe, affordable, high quality food, produced in a way that sustains and enhances the natural environment, and ensures the health and wellbeing of all.

The Organic Research Centre works, nationally and internationally, to:

- research and develop practical, sustainable land management and food production systems based on organic and agro-ecological principles
- foster knowledge exchange with and between current and future producers, food businesses and related professionals
- influence policy and public debates on the future of food and farming based on sound evidence

The Organic Research Centre (originally called Elm Farm Research Centre) was established in 1980 as a "Centre of Excellence" to address the major issues raised by a global economy based on an intensive agricultural system. It is the UK's leading research, development and advisory institution for organic agriculture, having played a pivotal role in the development of organic research, policy and standards since its foundation.

The organisation is firm in its belief that realistic solutions to the critically important environmental issues facing us all can be found. The Organic Research Centre continues to research, develop, provide and demonstrate solutions and to investigate appropriate technologies for processing, distribution and marketing of food. The Centre believes we can develop a genuinely sustainable, equitable and healthy food system based on production methods that husband finite resources and enhance biodiversity.

The Centre disseminates information through adviser training and accreditation services, producer conferences and courses, website, articles and policy papers, scientific papers and publications and the production of a regular journal - the ORC Bulletin. The organisation is based on Elm Farm, an 85 hectare (210 acre), fully converted organic farm. It also works through a network of established organic farms.

ORC's work, involving more than 30 staff and volunteers, covers a wide range of topics spread across eight programme areas (see below). Further information can be found on our website www.organicresearchcentre.com.

Place and Hours of Work.

The place of employment shall be at the Organic Research Centre, Elm Farm, Berkshire or such other places as the institute may reasonably require. This is specified in your Offer of Employment letter and agreed with you.

Hours of work may vary according to the post occupied and the letter of Offer of Employment will specify the hours which apply to you. The standard working week is 37 hours, and part-time hours are calculated pro rata on this basis. The Organic Research Centre's core office hours of work are 9am – 5:30pm Monday to Thursday and 9am-5:00pm Fridays with one hour for lunch. From time to time you may be required to work additional hours, to suit the needs of the business.

Probationary Period.

All staff will serve a six-month probationary period which must be completed satisfactorily before employment is confirmed.

Holidays

The standard holiday year runs from 1st January to 31st December. In addition to statutory holidays (New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, May Day, Spring Bank Holiday, Late Summer Bank Holiday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day) the basic holiday entitlement for full-time employees is 25 days per annum for Grade 1-5 roles (Research Technician, Research Assistant, Administrative Assistant and Administrator) and 30 days per annum for Grade 6 roles (Researcher/Senior Administrator/Consultant) and above. However, 3 days must be taken between 27th and 31st December to permit full closure of the office between Christmas and New Year. For part-time staff, entitlement to statutory bank holidays and annual leave will be pro-rata.

Pensions

The Government requires employers to provide a workplace pension arrangement for its workers; this is called 'pension automatic enrolment' (PAE). The Company has currently chosen NEST (National Employment Savings Trust) as its PAE provider for eligible employees. Currently, the Company will match an employee contribution of up to 5% of gross salary, subject to meeting the minimum contributions specified by law. The Company reserves the right to use an alternative provider other than NEST in respect of PAE at any time in the future. You will (provided that you meet certain criteria regarding your age and earnings) be automatically enrolled into NEST not later than three months after starting at the Company – further details regarding the pension benefits which will be available to you will be provided to you separately. You can choose to opt out of NEST but only after you have been automatically enrolled.

If you choose to opt-out of the NEST pension the company will make contributions to your own personal pension scheme given certain conditions are agreed, matching your own contributions on a like-for-like basis up to a maximum of 5% of gross salary.

ORC PROGRAMMES

(see www.organicresearchcentre.com for further information)

PLANT BREEDING FOR CROP RESILIENCE

The focus of our breeding programme is on increasing genetic diversity to produce crops that are more resilient to variations in climate and weather conditions; weed, pest and disease pressures; and other challenges, for example through the use of variety mixtures or composite cross populations. Most modern varieties have been selected for high use of inputs not permitted in organic farming. We also aim to develop crop varieties specifically suited to organic production, e.g. which incorporate traits such as lower nitrogen requirements and higher competitive ability with weeds.

- **ECOPB:** European Consortium for Organic Plant Breeding (ECOPB funded, www.eco-pb.org)
- **WHEALBI:** Wheat and barley legacy for breeding improvement (EU FP7-funded, www.whealbi.eu)
- **LIVESEED:** Improve performance of organic agriculture by boosting organic seed and plant breeding efforts across Europe (EU H2020-funded)
- **Population Marketing** trial (Self funded)

SOIL AND CROPPING SYSTEMS

Our work in this area is focused on the development of productive organic cropping systems including the use of legumes, cover crops and reduced tillage systems without the use of herbicides. We have demonstrated that complex legume mixtures contribute to fertility building while supporting pollinators, and that reduced tillage can contribute to reduced energy consumption and enhanced soil protection.

- **Diversifood** H2020 project started 2015
- **OK Net Arable** H2020 project started 2015 (<http://www.ok-net-arable.eu>)
- **GREATsoils** <http://www.greatsoils.org/>
- **ALECAPAB/Agribio:** Large-scale analysis of the productive capacity of organic farming
- **DIVERSify.** Designing innovative plant teams for ecosystem resilience and agricultural sustainability. EU H2020 funded. Started 2017. www.plant-teams.eu
- **DIVERIMPACTS.** Diversification through rotation, intercropping, multiple cropping, promoted by actors and value chains towards sustainability. H2020 project starting 2017
- **SoilBioHealth** Soil biology and health research partnership. AHDB funded.
- **Innovative salt reduction and fibre enhancement of artisanal sourdough bread products.** Innovate UK funded.
- **Agroecological soil management operational group.** English RDP (EIP Agri) funded.

AGROFORESTRY

The focus of our agroforestry research programme is the evaluation of a range of agroforestry systems (including both crops and livestock) in terms of their productivity, environmental and economic impacts, and their potential for agri-environmental policy. We are also investigating the potential of hedges and other landscape elements as sources for biofuels, generating an income to support their management and conservation.

- **AGFORWARD:** Agroforestry that will advance rural development (EU FP7-funded, www.agforward.eu)
- **SustainFarm:** FACCE-SURPLUS project started 2016 www.sustainfarm.eu
- **AFINET:** Horizon 2020 project starting January 2017
- **Woodchip operational group.** English RDP (EIP Agri) funded.

LIVESTOCK SYSTEMS

Our work in the area covers both ruminants (mainly cattle) and non-ruminants (pigs and poultry) with particular focus on forage production and utilisation, including the role of legumes as a home grown protein feed resource. We are also investigating animal nutrition, in particular minerals and trace elements in ruminants and key proteins in monogastrics. The impact of forage, supplementary nutrients, grassland management and housing on animal health is also addressed.

- **ISAGE:** Innovation for Sustainable Sheep and Goat Production in Europe. www.isage.eu
- **Optgraze:** Optimal grazing systems (NORSOK funded, www.bioforsk.no)

ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH

Our research focuses on the wider impacts of organic and other farming systems and the assessment of their sustainability and contribution to delivery of ecosystem services. It also explores concepts of health applicable to individual organisms and ecosystems.

- **Assessing the GHG impacts** of widespread conversion to organic farming in the UK (Cranfield University PhD)
- **Health Concepts:** (Ekhaga Foundation funded)
- **SMART.** Sustainability Monitoring and Assessment Routine. Funded by FiBL and Fees.
- **Consensus in sustainability metrics.** Funded by Sustainable Food Trust/Rothschild Foundation

BUSINESS AND MARKETS

This programme focuses on the analysis of farm incomes and costs of production, the availability and quality of organic market data, sector/market development as well as consumer attitudes, behaviour and willingness to pay, helping producers, food businesses and policy-makers to make better informed decisions.

- **Value added in organic supply chains** – DG Agri funded
- **Transitions to agroecological systems: farmers' viewpoints** – LUPG funded.
- **Organic Farm Management Handbook** (Self-funded)

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND COMMUNICATION

The focus of this programme is to build on the participatory ethos in our research programmes and to actively involve producers and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of the trials and interpretation of the results. We are also developing our approach to knowledge sharing using the internet, printed publications and events including conferences and training courses.

- **Agriculture information hub (Agriculture.co.uk)**
- **Innovative Farmers (Duchy Future Farming)**
- **SRUC MSc/PgDip Organic Farming Distance Learning partnership**
- **Producer conference**
- **Institute of Organic Training and Advice**
- **Publications, ORC Website, ORC Bulletin, E-bulletins, Social media, Library resources**

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION

Our work focuses on both the development and evaluation of policy support and payments for public good benefits, and the development and evaluation of regulations, standards and certification systems. We engage with external governmental and non-governmental organisations in order to facilitate the sound development of the organic sector in the UK and internationally and to influence policy-makers at local, national and international level in order to ensure that the potential of organic/ agro-ecological approaches is recognized and appropriate policies are developed.

- **ORC Policy Advocacy Programme, including agrienvironmental, research and regulatory themes**
- **SME Organic – development of regional organic action plans**